WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a

2   software system, said method comprising:

3   accessing a datafile descriptive of the underlying architecture;

4   transforming the datafile to determine architectural components used to

5   form the underlying architecture; and

6   rendering a plurality of graphical elements representative of the

7   architectural components on a graphical display, the graphical elements forming a

8   graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1   2.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   generating a plurality of subsections of the graphical image; and

3   locating the graphical elements in the subsections as described by the

4   datafile.

1   3.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the subsections are displayed

2   as tiers.

1   4.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising providing access to

2   the visualization on a network.

1   5.   The method according to claim 4, wherein the network is the Internet.

1   6.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising communicating the

2   rendered graphical representation across a network.

1   7   The method according to claim 1, further comprising receiving data for

2   said rendering from a network connection.

1   8.   The method according to claim 7, further comprising:

2   storing the data.

1   9.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   providing at least one control on the graphical display;

3   receiving a selection of the at least one control; and

4   performing a graphical operation on the graphical display indicative of

5   dynamic functional operations of the underlying architecture.

1   10.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the graphical display is a web

2   page.

1   11.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the datafile includes

2   extensible markup language (XML).

1   12.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising executing

2   interactive operations to provide a graphical representation of collaborative interaction

3   between the graphical elements.

1   13.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising altering the

2   graphical elements based on a selected configuration of the software system.

1   14   The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   receiving an event initiated by an operation performed in a second

3   graphical display operating in isolation of actual components of the underlying

4   architecture; and

5   performing an operation on the graphical display based on the event.

1   15.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

2   receiving an event initiated by an operation performed in a second

3   graphical display operating in conjunction with actual components of the underlying

4   architecture; and

5   performing an operation on the graphical display based on the event.

1   16.   A system for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a

2   software system, said system comprising:

3   a communication port for receiving information from a network;

4   a display unit for displaying the visualization of the underlying

5   architecture of the software system; and

6   a processing unit coupled to said communication port and said display

7   unit, said processing unit operable to:

8   receive the information indicative of the underlying architecture

9   from the network;

10   process the information indicative of the underlying architecture

11   of the software system; and

12   render the processed information on said display to display a

13   graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1   17.   The system according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit further:

2   generates a plurality of subsections on the graphical image; and

3   applies a plurality of graphical elements in the subsections as described

4   by the processed information.

1   18.   The system according to claim 16, wherein the network is the Internet.

1   19.   The system according to claim 16, wherein said communication port is

2   coupled to a network to provide access to a datafile located on a host server on the

3   network.

1   20.   The system according to claim 19, wherein the information is derived

2   from the datafile by the host server.

1   21.   The system according to claim 16, wherein the visualization is displayed

2   in a graphical user interface having at least one control for altering the visualization.

1   22.   The system according to claim 21, wherein the at least one control

2   initiates a simulated event.

1   23.   The system according to claim 16, wherein the visualization is displayed

2   on a web page.

1   24.   The system according to claim 16, wherein the information includes

2   extensible markup language (XML) code.

1   25.   The system according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit further:

2   receives an event initiated by an operation performed in a graphical user

3   interface operating in isolation of actual components of the underlying architecture; and

4   performs an operation on the graphical user interface based on the event.

1   26.   The system according to claim 16, wherein said processing unit further:

2   receives an event initiated by an operation performed in a graphical user

3   interface operating in conjunction with actual components of the underlying

4   architecture; and

5   performs an operation on the graphical display based on the event.

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1   27.   A system for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a

2   software system, said system comprising:

3   a servlet engine operable to manage the visualization;

4   a stylesheet database including at least one style format to display the

5   visualization; and

6   an interface component coupled to said servlet engine, said interface

7   component operable to receive events from the software system.

1   28.   The system according to claim 27, wherein the software system is a

2   website.

1   29.   The system according to claim 27, further comprising a storage device

2   having at least one datafile describing the visualization stored thereon.

1   30.   The system according to claim 27, wherein the system is a server

2   coupled to a network.

1   31.   The system according to claim 30, wherein the network is the Internet.

1   32   A computer-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of

2   instructions, the sequences of instructions including instructions, when executed by a

3   processor, causes the processor to:

4   access a datafile descriptive of the underlying architecture;

5   transform the datafile to determine architectural components used to

6   form the underlying architecture; and

7   render a plurality of graphical elements representative of the

8   architectural components on a graphical display, the graphical elements forming a

9   graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1   33.   The computer-readable medium according to claim 32, wherein the

2   instructions further cause the processor to communicate the graphical representation of

3   the underlying architecture across a network.

1   34.   The computer-readable medium according to claim 33, wherein the

2   network is the Internet.

1   35.   A system for providing a visualization of an underlying architecture of a

2   software system, said system comprising:

3   receiving a request for the visualization;

4   transforming the data to form information indicative of a visualization of

5   the underlying architecture; and

6   communicating the information across a network.

1   36.   The method according to claim 35, wherein the data is HTML.

1   37.   The method according to claim 35, wherein said transforming includes

2   applying a stylesheet to the data.

1   38.   The method according to claim 35, further comprising rendering the

2   information to display a graphical representation of the underlying architecture.

1   39.   The method according to claim 35, wherein the software system is a

2   website.

1   40.   The method according to claim 35, wherein the network is the Internet.